



African Training and Research
Centre in Administration for
Development



LOG-IN Africa



International Development
Research Centre

LOG-IN AFRICA e-LOCAL GOVERNANCE

PROCEEDINGS OF FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CAIRO (EGYPT) 5 - 6 June 2008

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Foreword

The potential of e-governance (or the integration of ICTs in governance processes) has been recognized by governments' world over. E-governance, for example, can greatly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of government processes, enhance the provision of information and delivery of services to citizens and other stakeholders, and promote public participation and consultation. However, the potential for e-governance in most African countries remains largely unexploited.

E-local governance, which is defined as the application of ICTs to transform the business of government and to enable the broad inclusion of citizens in public management, public service delivery and democratic participation at the local level, has received very little attention in most African countries. There are very few e-local governance initiatives several years after the development of national e-governance policies and strategies by many African governments. At the same time, the effect of these initiatives on local good governance has not been effectively assessed.

Local Governance and ICTs Research Network for Africa (LOG-IN Africa) is a pan-African network of researchers and research institutions from Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, South Africa and Uganda. It was formed in 2005 to assess the current state and outcomes of e-local governance initiatives in Africa, and in particular how ICTs are being used to realise good local governance. The overall research question is "What progress has been made and what are the outcomes in the provision of e-local governance in Africa; what are the challenges and threats; and what are the good practice strategies and solutions that are emerging?"

After the two-year research programme came to an end, CAFRAD/IDRC in collaboration with the host institution, the Faculty of Computers and Information, Cairo University, organized this International Conference. The conference brought together e-lo-

cal governance researchers, practitioners and developers from government, academia, industry and non-governmental organizations to share the latest findings in the theory and practice of e-local governance. About 70 international participants and some 15 Egyptian dignitaries and personalities attended the Conference. The Official Opening Ceremony was honoured by the presence of H.E. Dr. Ahmed Darwish, Minister of State for Administrative Development (Egypt) who delivered the opening and keynote address. The conference was also honoured by the presence of Dr. Aly Moselhy, Minister of Social Solidarity, Gen. Abdelsalam Mahgoub, Minister of Municipal Development, Dr. Aly Abdel Rahman, the President of Cairo University, as well as Dr. Abdelazeem Wazeer, the Cairo Mayor and Eng. Sayed Shehata, the Giza Mayor. The Opening Ceremony was equally honoured by the presence of Dr. Eglal Rached, IDRC Regional Director for North Africa and the Middle East.

Dr. Darwish drew attention to the importance of the Conference in the sense that it gave the opportunity to highlight the latest findings of the e-local governance initiatives and experiences of the African participant countries. The findings enabled the meeting to recognize that the African challenges are common (readiness, sustainability, poverty, illiteracy, etc.) and that there was need to team up together to resolve these challenges. He pointed out that nowadays ICTs have become a cardinal tool for developing economies, eliminating corruption, diffusing transparency and attaining community contribution for the welfare of citizens.

He then expressed his admiration of the work in LOG-IN Africa and ended by a word of encouragement "For each one of you, do not underestimate your contribution. Big integrations are summations of small deltas". He affirmed his belief that the Conference was a milestone of everybody's non-stop efforts to harvest the fruits of governance in the African continent which he defined as a continent with unexploited potential that would ensure a bright future for its people.

For her part, Dr. Eglal Rached expressed IDRC's pleasure in supporting the research project and hoped that the research findings could contribute to more effective policy-making and implementation of e-local governance in Africa.

She then drew attention to the importance of good governance by saying that transition of many African States, in the last decade, from authoritarian regimes to pluralistic and democratic systems had created demands from citizens for effective, participatory governance structures and services. Dr. Rached observed that pluralism, diversity and

good governance are the key to realizing the goals of sustainable and equitable development, poverty reduction and human rights. All these goals required improved access to knowledge and an increased local capability to generate, interpret and apply knowledge and concluded that LOG-IN Africa research results were instrumental for African Governments as they develop and implement their e-government strategies.

Prof. Timothy M. Waema

Research Network Coordinator/Conference Chair

CONTENTS

	PAGE
E-Governance Research and Evaluation Frameworks	
LOGIN_1 E-GOVERNANCE EVALUATION; TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED OUTCOME EVALUATION RESEARCH FRAMEWORK POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL ELEMENTS OF IMPLEMENTATION Waema, Timothy; School of Computing and Informatics; Nairobi, Kenya.	1
LOGIN_2 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR e-GOVERNMENT PROJECTS: THE CASE OF MAURITIUS Govinda, S.P.; Board of Investment, Port Louis, Mauritius. Chitto, H.B.; University of Technology, Port Louis, Mauritius.	15
LOGIN_3 OUTCOME BASED OPTIONS FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY: TOWARDS MEANINGFUL LINKS BETWEEN ELECTRONIC GOVERNANCE AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES Musyoka, Jason; The Steadman Group, Nairobi, Kenya.	21
E-Governance Policy	
LOGIN_4 DEEPENING DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NORTHERN GHANA: BRIDGING POLITICAL GAP THROUGH ICTS Gasu, John; University for Development Studies, Tamal, Ghana.	35
LOGIN_5 E-GOVERNANCE FOR SOCIAL AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Abrahams, Lucienne; LINK Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa. Newton-Reid, Lutske; Reid Management Consulting Services, Pretoria, South Africa.	43
LOGIN_6 E-GOVERNANCE IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN KENYA: POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL ELEMENTS OF IMPLEMENTATION Waema, Timothy; School of Computing and Informatics, Nairobi, Kenya. Mitullah, Winnie; Institute for Development Studies, Nairobi, Kenya.	67
E-Governance Outcomes	
LOGIN_7 A ROADMAP FOR E-LOCAL GOVERNANCE IMPLEMENTATION: A CASE STUDY OF MOZAMBIQUE Macueve, Gertrudes; University Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo, Mozambique. Nhampossa, José; University Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo, Mozambique.	79
LOGIN_8 ASSESSING E-SERVICE DELIVERY IN MAURITIUS: THE CASE OF THE REVENUE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM Shalini, Ramessur; University of Technology, Port Louis, Mauritius. Chitto, Hemant; University of Technology, Port Louis, Mauritius. Durbarry, R.; University of Technology, Port Louis, Mauritius.	89

	PAGE
<p>LOGIN_9 ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT ACTIONS FOR THE LAGUNA CITY HALL FROM THE MODERNIZATION OF THE CITY'S PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION</p> <p>de Oliveira, Thiago; I3G Institute, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Nicolini, Aline; I3G Institute, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Bedin, Sonali; I3G Institute, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Bueno, Tânia; I3G Institute, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Pinho, Nauro; City Hall, Laguna, Brazil.</p>	101
<p>LOGIN_10 ICT AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN INDIA: A CASE STUDY OF AKSHAYA</p> <p>Pardhasaradhi, Y.; Osmania University, Hyderabad, India. Ahmed, Safdar; Hyderabad, India.</p>	111
<p>LOGIN_11 ICTS IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE A CASE STUDY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION COMMUNICATION SYSTEM (LOGICS) IN UGANDA</p> <p>Asingwire, Narathius; Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. Muhoozi, Christopher; Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. Angeyo, Jennifer; Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda.</p>	117
<p>E-Governance Tools and Methodologies</p>	
<p>LOGIN_12 A MULTI-PERSPECTIVE MODEL FOR E-GOVERNMENT PROJECTS: THE CASE OF E-ALEXANDRIA</p> <p>Abdelsalam, Hisham; Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt. El-Kadi, Hatem; Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt.</p>	127
<p>LOGIN_13 A PROCESS MODELING METHODOLOGY FOR E-LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY PROJECTS IN EGYPT</p> <p>Fahmy, Aly; Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt. El-Kadi, Hatem; Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt. Abdelsalam, Hisham; Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt.</p>	137
<p>LOGIN_14 DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR CITY HALL – An exploratory research</p> <p>da Silva, Edson; Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil. de Oliveira, Thiago; Federal University I3G Institute, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Araújo, Thiago; Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil. Hoeschl, Hugo; Federal University I3G Institute, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Rover, Aires; Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil. Dias, Julio; Santa Catarina State University, Brazil.</p>	147
<p>LOGIN_15 E-LOCAL GOVERNANCE: A CASE STUDY ON LIFE-EVENT SERVICES IN THE KEBELES OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT OF ADDIS ABABA</p> <p>Atnafu, Solomon; Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Mequanint, Dessalegn; Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Adal, Yigremew; Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.</p>	157

	PAGE
LOGIN_16 ONTOJURIS PROJECT: AN EXERCISE OF ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT	171
<p>Bueno, Tânia; I3G Institute, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Hoeschl, Hugo; Federal University, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Bedin, Sonali; Federal University, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Rover, Aires; Federal University, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Lerena, Roberto; Universidad Fasta, Argentina. Cardenosa, Jesus; Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Madrid, Spain. Canello,Carola; Universidad de Chile, Santiago, Chile.</p>	
LOGIN_17 PROPOSITION OF A ROADMAP TO “EGOVERNEMENT FOR GOOD GOVERANCE”, IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	179
<p>Kettani, Driss; Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane, Morocco. El Mahdi, Asmae; Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane, Morocco.</p>	

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